

Kentucky Board of Education Report
Commissioner Gene Wilhoit
For
March 24, 2006 Council on Postsecondary Education Meeting

Major News Item

- **ASSESSMENT CONTRACTS APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT CONTRACT REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE**--The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) recommended to the Legislative Research Commission the award of its statewide assessment contract to Measured Progress. Measured Progress is the prime contractor, supported by WestEd as the test development subcontractor and the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning as the writing portfolio subcontractor. The Department also recommended the award of contracts to the following other contractors: ACT (predictive test contractor), CTB/McGraw Hill (norm-referenced contractor) and HumRRO (research contractor).

All of the above contracts were approved by the Government Contract Review Subcommittee at its March 14 meeting. Work with the contractors has now begun to put the revised statewide assessment in place that will be given beginning in the spring of 2007.

Through the proposals from Measured Progress and the other selected vendors, Kentucky gains all of the additional components that legislators, the Kentucky Board of Education and constituents have expressed are essential in order to have an instructionally sound, valid and reliable statewide assessment at virtually the same price per year that we are now paying for the current CATS assessment. These include:

- development and implementation of reading and mathematics tests in grades 3-8 that are aligned to Kentucky's content standards and will meet the requirements of *No Child Left Behind*
- a longitudinal measure of student progress for grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics that will provide year to year comparisons of achievement on individual students
- analytical scoring of the writing assessment that will give specific feedback to students and teachers on how to improve writing
- professional development for teachers on best practices for teaching and assessing writing to eliminate past abuses including reducing the amount of time spent on the writing portfolio
- electronic reporting and imaging techniques that will allow teachers to immediately score the common released items on the CATS test and use them for local accountability of students
- location of a scoring center in Kentucky to score the CATS test and tests from other states resulting in jobs for the state, direct involvement of

- Kentucky educators in the development of tests and scoring of student work, and reduction of shipping time and costs related to scoring
- addition of a predictive measure of postsecondary success at grades 8 and 10 that will enable reteaching geared to individual needs of students to take place well in advance of the senior year
 - expertise to move Kentucky to an online assessment over the next three years
 - significant experience in the development of end-of-course assessments for the high school level that will enable Kentucky to get these in the hands of teachers for local use
 - innovative proposals on how we could measure achievement in Arts and Humanities and Practical Living/Vocational Studies differently to help us transition in the future to more accurate methods of assessing what students know and are able to do in these areas
 - support in moving Kentucky closer to the vision of full implementation of a diagnostic/formative (snapshot) assessment system that would enable teachers to pretest and posttest students on an ongoing basis to know where they are in their learning at all times

These contracts put into place our redesigned assessment system, the culmination of almost two years of discussion about the assessment improvements needed to move education forward in Kentucky. All the key stakeholder groups have been involved in the design, including the Local Superintendents Advisory Council, the School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council, the National Technical Advisory Council on Assessment and Accountability, the legislature's Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee, the Interim Joint Committee on Education, and numerous internal advisory groups that include students, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members.

February 1-2, 2006 Kentucky Board of Education Highlights:

- **704 KAR 3:305, MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION APPROVED--**Changes to the minimum requirements for high school graduation were given final approval at the February meeting. These revised requirements will *take effect with the graduating class of 2012*.

Below is a summary of the new requirements:

- Language Arts: 4 credits (English I, II, III, IV) to include the content strands of reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, inquiry, conventions, analysis, and using technology as a communication tool

- Social Studies: 3 credits to include the content strands of historical perspective, including US History, geography, economics, government and civics, and cultures and societies
- Mathematics: 3 credits to include the content strands of number property and operation, measurement, geometry, data analysis and probability, and algebraic thinking and including the following minimum requirements:
 - One mathematics course taken each year of high school
 - Required courses shall include Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. An integrated, applied, interdisciplinary or technical/occupational course that prepares a student for a career path based on the student's Individual Learning Plan may be substituted for a traditional Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II course on an individual student basis
 - Prealgebra shall not be counted as one of the three required mathematics credits for graduation, but may be counted as an elective
- Science: 3 credits to incorporate lab-based scientific investigation experiences and includes the content strands of biological science, physical science, earth and space science, and unifying concepts
- Health: ½ credit to include the content strands of individual well-being, consumer decision, personal wellness, mental wellness, and community services
- Physical education: ½ credit to include the content strands of personal wellness, psychomotor, and lifetime activity
- History and appreciation of visual and performing arts (or another arts course which incorporates this content): 1 credit to include the content strands of arts, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts or a standards-based specialized arts course based on the student's Individual Learning Plan
- Academic and career interest standards-based learning experiences: 7 credits including 4 standards-based learning experiences in an academic or career interest based on the student's Individual Learning Plan
- Technology: Demonstrated competency

(Note: Changes were also made in the regulation's language to clarify the appropriate development and implementation of the Individual Learning Plan.)

An additional change was a revision to the awarding of a certificate of attendance for an exceptional student whose disability precludes a course of study leading to receipt of a diploma. Such a student would now receive a certificate of work readiness and employability related to an alternative course of study.

- **BOARD APPROVES 702 KAR 7:125, PUPIL ATTENDANCE--**Final approval to 702 KAR 7:125, Pupil attendance was given at the February meeting. The amendments will allow schools to count students in attendance who are participating in performance-based credit experiences and thus, generate SEEK funds.

In addition, a provision was added to the regulation to allow districts to receive full-day funding for students who are not six by October 1 but whose developmentally appropriate placement would best be served in the second level (first grade) of the primary program. This can only occur, however, if a student meets certain criteria specified in the regulation, is recommended for this placement to the Department of Education by local board approval, and is approved for the placement by the Department of Education.

- **FIRST REVIEW OF PROGRAM OF STUDIES REVISIONS OCCUR--**Changes to the minimum high school graduation requirements and adjustments to the Core Content for Assessment have necessitated changes to the Program of Studies. The Program of Studies outlines the minimum content standards required for all students for the required credits for high school graduation and the content standards for primary, intermediate and middle level programs that lead up to the high school requirements.

At its February meeting, drafts from the areas of science, social studies and high school reading were reviewed and discussed. The discussion was led by Karin Hess of the Center for Assessment, a national not-for-profit organization that is assisting the Department to accomplish this work under a very short timeline. It is anticipated that the Program of Studies will come back to the Board for final approval at its April 11-12 meeting.

- **703 KAR 5:010, WRITING PORTFOLIO PROCEDURES REVIEWED--**Due to design changes in the Kentucky Writing Portfolio, concerns from the field and instructional concerns of the Board, it became necessary to revise the language in 703 KAR 5:010, which governs writing portfolio procedures. The revisions are based on previous discussions with the Board regarding more direction on reduction of time spent on the portfolio and relative to finalizing the Administration Guidelines for Writing.

Changes to the regulation include:

Section 1. Appropriate Use of Time – A new Section 1 was written to establish a stronger focus on the appropriate use of time. New language makes clear that practices to reduce teacher and student time in preparing the portfolio are to be implemented, the amount of time spent on a single portfolio entry and the number of revisions of a single entry are to be limited, development of portfolio entries shall support the learning of content, and practices that use time efficiently shall be implemented.

Section 2. School and District Writing Programs – Establishes the framework for school and district writing programs including requirements for (1) working folders and the transition of the pieces in these folders from one grade level to the next; (2) the writing cluster leaders to be teacher leaders with experience in writing instruction and not be intern teachers; (3) professional development access and opportunity for teachers across the curriculum and grade levels; and (4) the school council's allocation of resources and use of resources in the school (e.g., extended school services, technology, staffing, etc.).

Section 3. Writing Instruction – Establishes that writing tasks are to be linked to real-world situations and writing styles and evolve out of the standards-based units of instruction. It requires that instruction include content area reading representing the kinds of writing students are asked to include in their portfolio and that time is provided within the classroom instructional time for development of writing. It limits the development of writing pieces at home. This section also provides clarification on conferencing by requiring teachers to use individual, small group and/or large group conferencing sessions rather than an implied one-on-one conferencing session, focusing conferencing and limiting the conferencing on one or two areas of need. It includes provisions that conferencing partners shall not take ownership of a student's writing or require an arbitrary number of revisions. Provisions are included to allow students to use word processing in the development of their writing pieces or submit pieces for the portfolio in their own handwriting; however, the school media centers are not to be restricted to the development of writing portfolios.

Section 4. Portfolio Design and Scoring – Changes the number of the portfolio pieces for each grade level to align with the 2007 assessment design approved by the Kentucky Board of Education and requires schools and districts to implement procedures for scoring student portfolios.

The regulation will come back for final approval to the April 11-12 meeting.

Upcoming Agenda Items for the April 11-12, 2006 Kentucky Board of Education Meeting Include:

- 704 KAR 3:530, Mathematics Achievement Fund (Final)
- 704 KAR 3:490, Teachers' Professional Growth Fund (Final)
- 704 KAR 3:303, Program of Studies (Final)
- 703 KAR 5:010, Writing Portfolio Procedures (Final)
- Discussion on the rigor of dual credit courses
- Report from the Kentucky High School Athletics Association on the Work of the Task Force Seeking Solutions to Issues within Proposals 3 and 20 and Related Proposed Bylaw Changes from the KHSAA Board of Control
- Assessment issues related to the new assessment contracts and No Child Left Behind